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# Agricultural Education



Maurice Dankenbring, Sweet Springs, Missouri, recently selected Star Farmer of America

"One should not engage for long in a work with which he is not proud to be connected. If one cannot feel that his work is important, he should leave it and go into something for which he has a profound respect."—F. D. Farrell.

# EDITORIAL COMMENT

A monthly magazine for teachers of agriculture. Managed by an editorial board chosen by the Agricultural Section of the Vocational Association and published at cost by the Meredith Publishing Company at Des Moines, Iowa.

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#### A. V. A. PAPERS

**T**HIS issue of the magazine is devoted largely to papers presented before the agricultural section of the Detroit meeting of the American Vocational Association. Obviously, not all the good papers can be published in one issue of the magazine, if indeed at all. Herein are three of the outstanding papers: The paper by Dr. George H. Wehrwein of the University of Wisconsin, on National Policies of Agricultural Land Utilization; the paper by Dr. C. H. Lane of Washington, D. C., on Adjusting Vocational Agriculture to Changing Conditions; and the paper by Dr. R. H. Woods of the University of Kentucky, on Teaching Farm Organization to Evening School Groups. Other papers will appear in succeeding issues of the magazine.

Surely no teacher of vocational agriculture is so dead as not to profit by studying the three papers presented in this issue. The magazine feels that it has rendered its readers a distinct service in publishing these papers.

#### A FEW HIGHLIGHTS OF THE A. V. A. MEETING

**R**AY FIFE, Ohio state supervisor of agricultural education, was re-elected president of the American Vocational Association during the recent session in Detroit. Dr. Fife's re-election broke a precedent of four years in which no president succeeded himself. His selection for second term was prompted by his energetic leadership of vocational forces in our financial emergency. The re-election comes as an honor to agricultural education.

A. K. Getman, state supervisor of New York, Professional Editor of this magazine for several years, was re-elected vice-president of the A. V. A., representing agriculture.

The national convention moves to Pittsburgh for next year.

The association voted in favor of establishing a permanent, paid secretary in Washington. L. H. Dennis was elected to this position. Mr. Dennis was formerly state director of vocational education for Pennsylvania and has been aggressive in aiding legislation supporting vocational education. Recently he has been state director in Michigan. Every teacher of vocational agriculture should cooperate in the support of a full-time secretary, whose duty it will be to see that the funds now available are not cut off, thus reducing the program of vocational education in the nation.

#### UPWARD AND ONWARD

**T**HERE was no notion in the minds of the men and women attending the eighth annual meeting of the

American Vocational Association in Detroit in December that they were in "for the last round up." Rather one would have assumed that if these conventioners had a theme song (in this day and age of theme songs) it must have been "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" so undaunted was their spirit. It is a good sign, for he is first subdued who first admits it. In all of the sessions of lobby and parlor, street corner or cafe, convention hall or executive caucus, not one look of defeat could be found. The spirit militant was in the air, not antagonistic but the purposeful, forward-looking, progressive spirit of a Horace Mann. Out of the gloom of yesteryear rays of light are filtering through.

How well all remember when another and earlier gathering of those individuals zealous for vocational education became funereal in character, and requiem was almost said. That was at the meeting of the National Society for Vocational Education in Buffalo in 1923. There a few dominant, gallant, never-say-die spirits refused consolations, however. Out of their challenging leadership grew the American Vocational Association which in ten years came to be the most militant and progressive organization support vocational education ever had.

Out of the recent Detroit meeting of the American Vocational Association must come an unconquerable spirit and strength of purpose such as will withstand the siege of depression, all the while strengthening its position from which to launch a counter attack of "education for all" which will brook no resistance nor concede no defeat. That will take power. That must come from *you* and *you* and *you!*—R. W. G.

#### APPROPRIATE FUTURE FARMER ARTICLES

**T**HIS magazine does not receive enough appropriate Future Farmer material. It is not that Future Farmers do not do things that other chapters should know about, but the advisers fail to write these things up and send them to our Future Farmer editor, Mr. H. O. Sampson, State College of Agriculture, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

For several years it has been proposed that we have a national Future Farmer magazine. The editor challenges you first to send in so many good things that the space allotted you in this magazine is filled to overflowing. We will give you more space than you now have if your material is good enough.

This magazine would like to have a lot of articles on the actual carrying out of the ideals and purposes of the Future Farmer organization. When you do something that might give some other chapter an idea, write it up and send it in. We get many articles telling about Doctor so-and-so's being responsible for something, or that give a long list of prizes won by a long list of individual boys, or about a very fine pig or calf produced by some individual. All of these things are all right in their place. In the opinion of the editor, however, they seldom illustrate either leadership (in the best sense) or cooperation—the ideals of the Future Farmer organization. They seldom give other chapters or other associations an idea.

#### DR. A. W. NOLAN BECOMES EDITOR OF PROFESSIONAL SECTION

**D**R. A. W. Nolan of the University of Illinois, has been appointed editor of the Professional Section of this magazine. He succeeds Dr. A. K. Getman, who resigned in December, due to the pressure of other duties. The magazine is much indebted to Dr. Getman for the high type of service he has rendered in editing the Professional Section. It looks forward to the work of Dr. Nolan, a writer of national reputation. Most teachers of agriculture have read some of his books and some of his human-interest stories. While the magazine regrets to lose Dr. Getman from its staff, it is happy that Dr. Nolan has consented to accept the responsibility of the professional editor. Give him your support.



# Professional



## National Policies of Agricultural Land Utilization

GEORGE S. WEHRWEIN, University of Wisconsin

THERE have been three phases in American land policies which can be designed as (1) the stage of exploitation up to 1900; (2) the era of conservation, 1900 to 1920; and (3) the present period of readjustment since 1920. However, these dates do not mark complete changes of policy. In some places exploitation of our natural resources is still going on, and the sentiment for conservation was born long before 1900. All that can be said is that the dominant philosophy of the periods is expressed by the words "exploitation," "conservation," and readjustment.<sup>1</sup>

The federal government was the owner of practically all the land or natural resources of the nation, with the exception of the 13 original colonies, Texas, parts of Kentucky and Tennessee, and lands alienated before we obtained possession. The earliest policy was to make this land a source of revenue, but gradually this policy shifted to making it a free gift to the pioneer. It was felt that land was a rightful reward to the settler who created farms out of the wilderness, and the pioneer has been given a place in the hall of fame second only to the soldier. Consciously or unconsciously, our policy was to get the public domain into the hands of farmers as fast as possible. Private property, it was believed, would give us the highest production, a stable population in line with the best interests of the nation as well as the individual. The self-interest of the owner would in itself conserve the resource for the future. No one doubted the wisdom of Arthur Young when he said, "Give a man the secure possession of a bleak rock, and he will turn it into a garden; give him a nine-year lease of a garden, and he will convert it into a desert." The same reasoning was applied to forests. Private property in forest land, it was said, would develop the nation, furnish work for labor, supply the people with lumber, and allow the states the privilege of taxing this resource. Self-interest would lead the owners to protect the timber from fire and trespass. The early attempt to reserve mineral lands was changed to a policy of alienation, and all land became private property under acts designed primarily for farm land. If the entire public domain had been good land, Uncle Sam undoubtedly would not have any land left; as it is, there are still 176 million acres of "vacant, unappropriated, and unreserved public lands" open to settlers.

The first break in this policy came in 1872 when President Grant set aside

Yellowstone National Park, thus laying the foundation of our recreational land policy. In 1891 an act was passed permitting the President to set aside public lands for forests. Presidents Harrison and Cleveland took advantage of this law to start our federal forest program. This policy was strengthened in 1911 by the Weeks law permitting the outright purchase of land to protect watersheds, and later the Clark-McNary Act allowed the purchase of land for timber production,—certainly a decided change from the earlier policies relating to forests.

### *The Conservation Era 1900-1920*

After the Civil War the Indian power was broken, and the ranchman brought his cattle and sheep to replace the buffalo. But soon the new farm machinery, prairie plows, well-drilling machinery



George S. Wehrwein

ery, windmills, and wire fencing gave the farmer the tools with which to conquer the prairies. Free land made the conquest easy financially, and within 30 years 400,000,000 acres of land were added to our farm area. But by 1900 this advance of the frontier almost stopped. In the decade after 1900 only 40 million acres of farm land were added, and people said, "Free land is gone." That land was becoming scarce was shown by the doubling of the value of farm land between 1900 and 1910. Prices of farm products rose, and people in the urban areas began investigating the high cost of living. Population was increasing, and the nation began to take thought for tomorrow, and echoed

James J. Hill's question, "How are we to provide our children with shelter and daily bread?"<sup>2</sup> It also became apparent that our forests and mineral were not inexhaustible. Out of this background the policy of conservation had its birth, and its prophets were President Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot, at that time chief of the National Forest Service. Probably the high point in creating this policy was the conference of the governors held at the White House at the invitation of the President in May, 1908. So convinced was the President of the immediate importance of conservation that he said in his opening address, "It is the chief material question that confronts me, second only . . . . to the great fundamental questions of morality."<sup>3</sup>

Although the forests and other natural resources furnished the more dramatic incidents of the conservation movement, agricultural land came into the picture in many diverse ways. The need for more subsistence on the one hand and the deterioration of our soils through erosion and exhaustion of the critical elements on the other were emphasized by many speakers at the Governor's Conference and by President Van Hise in his *Conservation of Our Natural Resources*, published in 1910.

It should be noted that the program which came as a result of this policy was designed to solve the food problem, and not to help farmers. As a matter of fact, this period of rising prices and scarcity of land was in many ways a golden age for agriculture. However, there was no conscious policy to secure adequate subsistence at the expense of the farmers; in fact, it was believed that they would prosper automatically as the result of these programs.

The first part of this program consisted of encouraging the increase of the area in farms. This coincided with the interests of land companies who had land to sell and railroad companies who were looking for more tonnage. States and counties with sparse population were anxious to have more farmers come in to add to the population and create more taxable wealth, especially those with alarming areas of

1. In this paper the term policy is used to designate the philosophy or ideas which underlies and is fundamental to a course of action, and which acts as the guiding principle upon which programs are built. The program consists of the particular laws and acts enacted under a policy.
2. Hill, James H., *Highways of Progress*, Doubleday Page and Co. 1912, p. 8.
3. *Proceedings of a Conference of Governors*, May 13-15, 1908, Government Printing Office, 1909, p. 3.

cut-over land, some of which was tax delinquent in the 90's and early part of the present century. States encouraged immigration through publicly supported immigration departments. In 1920, 40 states had such offices, or aided private organizations in this work. Agricultural colleges took an active part in promoting settlement, and in helping immigrants to clear land.

Most of these activities were state or local, but the federal government was eager to help. It took an active part in increasing production when the Reclamation Service began the construction of irrigation works as a federal project in 1902. Its chief justification was said to be the exhaustion of free land. Frederick H. Newell, former director of the Reclamation Service, said, "If the United States was to continue the policy of providing new homes and for providing additional foodstuffs, it was obvious that the congress must adopt some scheme of this kind; one which could make available to coming generations opportunities for home-making comparable to those offered the pioneers."<sup>4</sup> Thus another change was made in the relation of the federal government to land.

While the agricultural lands were being expanded horizontally, a second part of the program was to expand production vertically by increasing yields, improving the quality of agriculture, and reducing wastes. The farmer already on the land held the key to this situation, and since there was no dictatorship to force him to improve this method, the program was to reach him through education. Van Hise proposed "a great campaign of education which shall directly or indirectly reach every farmer in the country."<sup>5</sup> "Of all the problems of conservation," he said, "the most difficult, the most pressing, is to get the necessary knowledge of applied science of agriculture to the 6,000,000 farmers of the United States. James J. Hill recently said that 5,000 teachers of agriculture are now needed in this country."<sup>6</sup> It is hardly necessary to rehearse the history of agricultural education and extension which grew out of the same policy as our land programs.

So vigorous was the policy of agricultural expansion that it conflicted sharply with forestry. People believed, or acted as if they believed, that eventually all the land except the deserts, swamps, and poorest sands would become farms under the Malthusian pressure. So strong was this sentiment that state forest policies were hindered or even reversed in favor of agricultural development. Under this policy land submarginal for agriculture was put into farms, the high prices of the War concealing its submarginality. But with the War at an end, with the collapse of the price structure, it was abandoned in addition to much land supermarginal in ordinary times.

At the end of the conservation era we were faced with several unpleasant situations which have become worse instead of better during the readjustment period of 1920 to 1934. Private property in forest land has failed to give us adequate watershed protection. It has not conserved nor replenished our forest resources. Public acquisition of forest

land has been too slow. Since the World War much of the so-called "forest land," rather cut-over land held for prospective farm use, has become tax delinquent, and millions of acres have reverted to counties and states. In other words, private forest land has proved to be the most unstable type of land ownership, and wherever it has become tax delinquent or reverted to public ownership, the burden of taxes on the adjacent farm land has increased to crushing proportions.

The conservation of agricultural land, particularly erosion control, was one of the highlights at the Governor's Conference in 1908. Our policy so far has been to rely on enlightened self-interest, fortified by education, to solve this perplexing question for us. Yet in spite of educational work, erosion has increased at an alarming rate. In 1910 it was estimated that 4 million acres had been totally destroyed, and a much larger area seriously injured.<sup>7</sup> In 1928 the area incapable of utilization had increased to 15 million acres. Now more careful surveys indicate that 34 million acres are thoroughly devastated, and 125 million acres injured more or less.<sup>8</sup> There have also been serious losses of the critical elements through cropping and leaching. Since the World War, the low prices have tended to increase soil destruction because farmers are unable to make expenditures for fertilization and reclamation. In a very real sense, unregulated private property has failed to conserve our soil resources.

#### *The Period of Readjustment— 1920-1934*

We are now in a period of readjusting our policies and programs to certain radically different land requirements. During the War our agricultural plant was abnormally expanded, and rehabilitation itself would have been a painful process. However, other factors made matters worse. European countries began a policy of self-sufficiency and excluded our products on the one hand and built up their own productive capacity on the other. It is reported that England has increased her production 10 per cent, Italy 20 per cent, and Germany and Austria 50 per cent since the War.<sup>9</sup> There are Americans who suggest a similar policy for the United States—complete self-sufficiency.<sup>10</sup> If the American self-contained policy is carried out and our farmers' market is reduced to domestic requirements, we must readjust the land uses on about 50 million acres of crop land, the area now devoted to producing the part of the wheat, tobacco, and other crops sold abroad. This is about 15 per cent of our entire cropped area. Since about half of our cotton is exported, it would mean a reduction of 21 million acres in the Cotton Belt, and approximately 900,000 farmers would have to turn to other crops. In addition we export nearly half of our tobacco and a fifth of our wheat. Here is a case where a land policy will depend very much on our national policies. A severe contraction of our agricultural area is necessary if the "self-contained" policy prevails.

However, even the domestic market for farm products has shrunk because

of changes in the consuming habits of our people. The change in women's dress and the shift of rayon has reduced the demand for cotton. The per-capita consumption of cereals and some of the meats has decreased, whereas the consumption of sugar, dairy products, fruits and vegetables has increased. The shifts have been from the land-using crops to the labor-using crops. This change came during our period of urban prosperity, and the depression has hastened the downward trend.

The farmers' market has also been reduced by the declining rate of population growth due to restriction on immigration and the fall in the birth rate. Whereas the policy of the conservation era was based upon an expected population of 142 million in 1930 and over 200 million in 1950, our present policy must be adjusted to a population of 123 million in 1930 and a stationary population of about 150 million people by 1950. An increase of 5 to 10 per cent more farm products in the next decade, and 20 per cent ultimately needed for the 150 million people can easily be produced on the farms we now have, by the use of more fertilizers and better practices. Dr. O. E. Baker concludes, "The population prospect suggests that we need no more farm land."<sup>11</sup>

On the other hand, the farmer's capacity to produce has been increased in an unforeseen and incredible manner. The shift from animal power to tractors and automobiles, the change from the less productive to the more productive crops, the mechanization of farm operations, and the improvements in animal husbandry have added 20 to 25 per cent to productive capacity of the agricultural plant, without any increase in crop acreage or yields per acre. These factors have had the same result as if we had added 60 million acres of crop land since 1920. It is safe to predict similar economies in the future. It is prophesied that the new creature, the "agrobiologist," by the best combination of seed, soil, and water will be able to produce the crops now grown on 241 million acres on 47 million acres, an area about the size of Kansas.<sup>12</sup> All of which emphasizes the fact that what this country needs is not expansion, but contraction of the agricultural area.

There was one redeeming feature in the farmer's situation in the post-war period until 1929. Urban industry was flourishing, and cities were growing rapidly. Urban population increased by 12½ million, whereas farm population decreased by over 4 million. This urban increase took place despite the fact that in large cities there is a deficit of births over deaths of 22 per cent and in smaller cities of 10 per cent. On the other

4. Van Hise and Havemeyer, *Conservation of Our Natural Resources*, Macmillan, 1930, p. 155.

5. Van Hise, *Conservation of Our Natural Resources*, pp. 353-358.

6. Van Hise, *Conservation of Our Natural Resources*, p. 314.

7. Wallace, H. A., "World Agriculture—Its Significance for Rural America," *Rural America*, September, 1933.

8. Ibid.

9. See, *America Self-Contained*, by Samuel Crowther, Doubleday, Doran Co., 1933.

10. Address at Minneapolis, December 2-3, 1932. (mimeographed.)

11. Norton, Henry Kittredge, "Enter the Agrobiologist," *The New Outlook*, Sept. 1933.

hand, villages and the farms have a surplus, and it was this surplus which filled the gap between deaths and births in the cities. In fact, not only the surplus rural population moved to the cities, but many a farmer left the country to work for Henry Ford and other industrialists. It is estimated that 5 million rural people went to the cities between 1920 and 1929. This exodus, if continued long enough, would have redeemed agriculture. By and by, a balance might have been reached, leaving just enough farmers to feed and clothe the cities. Sir Daniel Hall stated a few years ago that only 10 per cent of a nation's population need be on the land.<sup>12</sup> We were on our way to realize this condition. Cities were capable of absorbing all who were released from agriculture to such an extent that Robert Murray Haig could say in 1926, "The question is changed from 'Why live in a city?' to 'Why not live in a city?'"<sup>13</sup>

Instead of "viewing with alarm," this was a case for rejoicing. A land program instituted at this time to help people leave the submarginal lands would have reduced the agricultural plant to its proper capacity and left only the farmers on the supermarginal land. Before 1929 they "had some place to go."

Under the conditions assumed, the philosophy of rural education could have been revised. With the contraction of the agricultural land and of farm population as the ideal, schools could have deliberately educated a large part of the rural population for urban living. Those who chose to remain should, of course, receive an equally good education for the kind of farming which to me is the ideal, the "commercial farm" organized on business principles. It should be large enough to give its operator a sufficient income to enjoy a high standard of living to include bath tubs, radio, electric lights, a car, newspapers and magazines, and opportunity for travel.

Personally, I would rule out the so-called "subsistence farm," the small, "self-sufficing" farm from which the operator sells little or nothing and therefore buys little or nothing. Perhaps, even under the best of conditions, we may not get rid of subsistence or near-subsistence farms. There were almost a half million in the United States in 1930. But if I were planning the agriculture I would like to see, I would no more include subsistence farming in my scheme of things than a city planner would deliberately put a slum in his ideal city.

#### *Migration Reversed*

However, conditions have changed since 1929, and migration has been reversed. In 1930 the cityward movement just balanced the retreat from the city. In 1931 the net migration to the land was 200,000 which increased to 500,000 during 1932. Added to the surplus of births over deaths, this meant that there were a million more people in the rural country in 1932 than the year before.

The cities have become panic-stricken. Many people have become defeatists, who believe that cities cannot recover, and who advocate a retreat to primitive agrarianism and self-sufficing farms. Publishers, industrialists, and public officials have suddenly become rhapsodic

about "Good mother earth," the land, the beauties of the rural scene, and life *a la Thoreau*. How much of this is genuine and how much it can be traced to a desire to get people off urban poor relief and dumping them on the country is difficult to say. I cannot help but quote the solution proposed by one writer, "In addition to returning millions to the land, the governments, national and state, must assist farmers everywhere into such close organizations as shall enable men to limit and regulate farm output and set rational prices in cities for farm products."<sup>14</sup> In less highbrow language, (1) get millions of people out on the land; (2) help them organize their own A. A. A. program to limit production; (3) stand back of their Holiday movement to set "rational" prices for their products.

While some advocate a concerted subsidized movement to get people out on the land, others favor a compromise by having the laborers operate small, part-time farms as well as having regular city employment. This appeals to industrialists because it provides cheap unemployment insurance as well as a measure of security for the laborer. On the other hand, it had appealed to the workers even before the depression started. This is shown by the growth of part-time farming in the eastern states. Massachusetts had 60,000 farms of this kind in 1930, about 50 per cent of all the farms in the state.<sup>15</sup>

However, there is another group who want to promote decentralization of industry, not because the machine age has broken down, but as a part of a still greater mechanical evolution. As industry is decentralized, part-time farming has a logical opportunity to develop. Farmers who are displaced by such readjustment are expected to find opportunities for employment when the greater decentralized industrialization replaces the present concentrated industries.

#### *Subsistence Homesteads*

Within a relatively short time this policy has become solidified enough to become a program of the Roosevelt Administration. Under the Department of the Interior, 25 million dollars are to be spent in demonstrating "subsistence homesteads," not to be confused with "subsistence farming." Primarily, they are communities of part-time farmers with a job in industry. It is also proposed to help stranded industrial workers such as the soft coal miners whose jobs are gone, and who will have to rely on their farms almost exclusively. It is suggested that distressed families from the "agricultural slums" areas might also be settled in subsistence homestead communities. Closely akin to the above plan is the movement sponsored by the Federal Forest Service to settle people on or near the forests, who will be given about 100 days work by the Service. This gives them a guaranteed minimum income, and they can use the remaining time on their small farms. Several communities have already been started, notably one among the West Virginia coal miners. The Tennessee Valley Authority has similar projects in mind.

As far as the purposes of these programs are concerned, there is little to be criticized. People were going to the

land anyway, and guidance and direction is better than laissez-faire. But we must not delude ourselves that this is "farm relief." Every time a former city dweller raises a bushel of potatoes for his own use, he deprives a farmer of the market for a bushel of potatoes. Furthermore, I cannot share the defeatist attitude that seems to lie back of so much of the back-to-the-land propaganda. I cannot believe that urbanization is through, and that we must retreat from the machine age. To admit that, is to admit that the machine has "got us licked." But, if the machine will serve mankind even better than it has in the past, and industrialization will go forward, the law of the location of industries will still hold. This law has tended toward congestion of industries and housing in the past, but since horizontal transportation has become more and more efficient, we can expect some decentralization of both factories and residential areas.

#### *Public Domain Policy*

Two other policies are not consistent with the need of contracting the agricultural area and reducing farm population: (1) the policy with respect to the public domain; (2) with respect to reclamation.

As stated earlier, there are still 176,000,000 acres of public domain, practically all in the far West. Many who have tried to make homes on this land have failed. During the past few years, magazines and papers have again revived the illusion that Uncle Sam is giving away farms for which there seems to be official encouragement. Will Rogers, our national court jester, never was more ironical than when he said,

"Well, we had thought that that foolishness had pretty well died out, but no, this year it springs up again. The Government decided that the West should be settled again. The first settling on unoccupied land didn't take, so they would, as we say in the movies, try a 'Retake.' So now they have issued an ultimatum that every ranchman shall take down all his 'Drift' fences, all his pastures that are government land, and give the old ad reader in the papers another chance to starve to death. Principally they offer it to ex-soldiers. War wasn't tough enough, they are going to dare 'em to live on a government claim, and make the old cowman run his cattle right out on the open range."<sup>16</sup>

The public domain is not under the authority of any branch of the federal government which has management powers. It is a "no man's land" open to grazing by anyone; the result is overstocking, denuding of the range, and destructive erosion. Instead of a standing invitation to try homesteading again, it would be best to close it to agri-

12. Hall, Sir Daniel, "Feeding the World," *Atlantic Monthly*, May, 1925.

13. Haig, Robert M., "Toward an Understanding of the Metropolis," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Feb. 1926, pp. 213 and 188.

14. Dodd, M. D., "Back to the Land," *Chicago Tribune*, March 19, 1933.

15. Rozman, David, "Part-time farming in Massachusetts," *Massachusetts Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin*, 266 (1930).

16. *Milwaukee Journal*, October 8, 1933.

cultural settlement forever. It should be placed under grazing management similar to the federal forests, and its use coordinated with other federally owned land, state land, and privately owned lands with which it is intermingled. The question of ceding it finally to the states is a debatable one, but management should be substituted for the present policy, irrespective of ownership.

#### *Reclamation*

Reclamation by the federal government is so well entrenched as part of a national policy that we must accept it, at least for the present, in spite of the necessity for contracting the agricultural area. Accused of adding to the farm surplus, its champions minimize its contributions to agricultural production by saying, "One timely rain in the Mississippi Valley will cause a greater increase in crop production than will all the crops grown under federal works;" yet in the same paper Dr. Mead boasts, "The crops taken from the irrigated fields of this area (Snake River, Idaho) give more business to the Union Pacific Railroad in a year than was furnished by the whole state before the irrigation development started."<sup>17</sup>

Much could be said about the question of the government's engaging in reclamation at all. The western states have benefited, of course, but other states have the same desires to see the policy broadened to include draining the wet lands of the South and the Lake States and even include aid in clearing cut-over lands. It would not take much agitation and propaganda to bring this about.

However, the National Land Planning Committee laid down a principle which justifies a certain amount of federal reclamation in the western states, and answers some of the objections to federal forests and to other federal non-taxable lands which occupy almost 245 million acres in the 11 western states. It is, that in so far as the disposition and use of the land of a state for national purposes limits the development of the resources by the people, the state should be compensated in some appropriate way—namely, aid to reclamation, aid for road construction, and return of part of the receipts from national forests.<sup>18</sup>

The above examples show that our national policies are not always consistent, nor do they agree with state policies. While the federal government is adding more land to the farm area in the western states, the state of New York is spending public money buying the poorer farm land for forests.

Theoretically, every form of government work which adds to the farm area or keeps land in use because of government expenditures should be abandoned. An engineering editor raised the question whether it is good economy to spend a third of a billion dollars on Mississippi flood control to save land worth about a half a billion.<sup>19</sup> If we have to decrease our farm area, especially in the cotton belt, in line with an "America Self-Contained" policy, why not let the Mississippi have the land? Instead of spending the money on levees, use it to move the people to other places. Let the land go back to trees; the flooding and silting will only increase its productivity if we

ever want to use it for farming again. The same cannot be said for neglecting erosion control. An erosion-control program will reduce the area of land in crops, and preserve the better soils which, if lost, can be restored by nature only in terms of thousands of years.

#### *Submarginal Land*

The federal government recognizes that some of its programs enlarge the farm area. A new corporation has been set up, according to recent reports, which will spend from 25 million to 50 million dollars to "lease, rent, or buy outright" the so-called submarginal areas which the President said would be taken out of cultivation as fast as good, new land was brought in by drainage or irrigation projects. However, it seems that the plan goes beyond the balancing of the submarginal areas against the good areas, not on an acre basis, but 4 to 10 acres of poor land for 1 of good. Secretary Wallace spoke of it as a "process which might lead in time to rational resettlement of America." It is too early to comment on the plan and its objectives. If it is merely to buy enough poor land to offset the production on the reclaimed land, it will have no effect on total production. Such a program, however, calls for two expenditures to accomplish what no expenditure would have accomplished in the first place.

The removal of people from the submarginal lands as a policy for its own sake will meet with favor, but to resettle these people on better land will have no helpful effect on the agricultural surplus. It should increase production if the resettled families are to enjoy a larger income than they had in their old home. Nevertheless, the fact that these families are thereby raised from the submarginal level to a living income, is, in itself, a worthy purpose.

#### *Poorer Lands and the Market Supply*

Finally, it should be recognized that the removal of farmers from the poorer lands has very little effect on the marketable supply of farm products. Most of these farms are the so-called "subsistence farms" which sell but little, and the others are in the lower-income brackets. If half the land in farms were taken out of cultivation beginning with the poorest land and the smallest farms, the total marketable supply would be reduced only 11 per cent, according to Secretary Wallace.<sup>20</sup> It should be noted, however, that the program of buying of land for forests and the reversion of land to public ownership, especially abandoned farm land, have a tendency to reduce the farm acreage, actual and potential. Forest and farm land utilization programs must be coordinated and linked with recreational land programs. To carry out programs of land use as between local, state, and national governments, the following elements should also come into the picture: (1) land classification as primary to any program of land utilization; (2) adjustment of taxation policies and local government as the result of and to facilitate changes in land use; (3) grants in aid to local governments and even to individuals to help in making these adjustments; (4) comprehensive land

planning.

#### *Private Control Over Private Land*

The final suggestion is that we strengthen public control over private land utilization. In city land, through zoning, building-height restrictions and similar laws, people are told what they may or may not do with their land, and the courts have upheld this use of the police power. The zoning power has recently been extended to counties in California and Wisconsin.

Probably another application of the police power will be necessary to control erosion. In many places this destructive force has gone so far that the individual farmer is financially helpless to rescue his farm from ruin. It has also become a community affair because many public interests are involved. At present the government is pursuing a program of helping the farmer through the C. C. C. camps and even larger projects. But what assurance have we that he will continue with the desirable practices begun under government direction? Perhaps aids, exemptions from taxation, or other inducements will be necessary, plus regulation to keep what we have achieved.

We have come a long way in half a century, from exploitation to conservation—which often was mere conversation—to policies and programs which are coming to grip with realities. Fifty years ago it was impossible to create public forests by reserving the public domain; today we are planning to spend \$50,000,000 to buy submarginal farm land. Twenty years ago Van Hise said, "As rapidly as a sentiment can be developed for their enforcement, laws should be passed which will prevent the neglect of the land. The precautions necessary to prevent excessive erosion may be enforced by law, since they vitally concern the common welfare not only of this but of all succeeding generations."<sup>21</sup> At that time few people were willing to go as far as that, but today sentiment is rapidly being developed for a policy of encouragement, aid, and regulation to control erosion on private land. Fifty years ago American cities began planning their land uses, then the planning idea was expanded to include the metropolitan region; today we talk of county planning, state, and even national land planning. The Tennessee Valley Authority is to demonstrate land planning on a large scale. But we are in the midst of such rapid changes that policies are conflicting and confusing. In many ways we are still dazed by the new situation. Instead of prospects of famine, there now is land for bread in great plenty, land to provide shelter in abundance, and millions of acres of land left for recreation, so necessary in this nervous and hectic civilization.

17. Mead, Elwood, "The Place of Federal Reclamation in a Federal Land Policy," *Proceedings of the Conference on Land Utilization*, Chicago, Nov. 19-21, pp. 20-22.

18. Publication IV, March, 1933, *Conservation of Grazing Resources of the Remaining Public Domain*.

19. *Engineering News Record*, December 29, 1927.

20. U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Radio Service, *Farm Flashes*, November 20, 1933.

21. *Conservation of Natural Resources*, p. 314.

# Adjusting Vocational Agriculture To Changing Conditions

C. H. LANE, Chief, Agricultural Education Service

## A Changing Rural Philosophy



C. H. Lane

**W**E ARE not at the end of our progress as a civilized people. When we lose faith in gambling, speculation and turn toward fundamental values, we shall make this country a better place in which to live. As a start we have undertaken to put our farm land, the basis

of our entire national structure, in a better order. In consequence we are being forced to think of what we ought to do. With the 40,000,000 marginal acres of plowed land the New Deal is proposing to take out of cultivation because the world no longer will pay us for the extra wheat, cotton, and corn we have been growing there, it looks as if we were tending for the time being toward a self contained national economy whether we like it or not. It is common knowledge that we are farming hundreds of thousands of acres that ought not to be farmed. Much better land on which a family would have a chance to make a decent living could be drained, irrigated, rescued from washing, or otherwise reclaimed. In view of this, President Roosevelt has announced that as fast as good new land is brought into production a corresponding amount of inferior land will be taken out. This may mean bringing in one acre and taking out ten. It may mean planned migrations from one region to another.

One thing is sure for the present at least and that is farm production conducted without regard to human values is at an end. As Secretary Wallace has said, "One of the great tragedies that has come out of the haphazard settlement of this country is to be found where families of the best blood and training, folks with a fine point of view and a fundamental philosophy, are slaving their lives away on farms that are not fit to work or live on. We want to fix things so that people are working where their labor will do some good, where they will have a real opportunity and the joy of working and creating without being penalized for it."

There is certainly a lot of loose thinking in reference to the Agricultural Adjustment Program. I have reference to the fact that there is not the slightest incompatibility between reducing acreage and producing well. What we used to call efficiency in farm production was in no way regulated to the demand for the crop in question. This inefficiency in planning and marketing could be tolerated as long as Europe furnished an unlimited market. Today unregulated individual efficiency brings us social disaster. The thing to do now is to farm only land that is worth farming and farm it better than ever.

The newly created social machinery of the New Deal will soon be discarded unless the hearts of our people permit the operation of this machinery for the general good. The adversity of the past three years has made the great majority willing to enter into a vast cooperative effort on a scale never before dreamed of. It seems to be rather obvious, however, that while the American people have learned something as a result of their adversity and are willing to pull together to get out of it, they have not yet fully learned their lesson. The speculative fever is still in our blood. All too many of us are still exploiters at heart.

## Farming for the Market

A controlled production is the watchword of the hour. As we change from producing for world markets to self-sufficiency farming, the management phase of farming becomes more important in our program. This is a curriculum problem. Every agriculture teacher should be working on it, especially in connection with his adult group of farmers. The demand for evening school instruction should increase out of all proportion to that of the past.

Marketing, especially cooperative marketing, becomes more important. The curriculum must be kept up to date with respect to this subject. Some of our teachers are doing an excellent job of giving their students real training in marketing. The tribe should increase.

## Increasing Results of Technological Research

The present Secretary of Agriculture once made a criticism to me of the agriculture teachers by comparing them with the county agricultural agents. Mr. Wallace at that time felt that the agriculture teachers were not as up to date in their fund of knowledge with reference to technological research as were the county agents. On the whole I believe this is a fair criticism and especially of those teachers who have never had any experience in teaching adult classes. There is no doubt in my mind but that there is real need for an agency to constantly keep up with, organize, and make available new material for teachers of agriculture. That this has already become a big job—I mean that of keeping up with technological research—is easily demonstrated from any record of current research in progress. As reported by the Office of Experiment Stations of the United States Department of Agriculture, for example, to consider only one group of agencies of scientific research in agriculture, research of this character being conducted in 1931 included over 5,000 separate topics. Of this number, 355 were in the field of rural economics and sociology. There were also 34 classed as educational projects. Of course, no one vocational teacher will be professionally interested in all of this research. On the other hand,

probably no one of these 5,000 research projects is entirely devoid of interest for some one or more vocational teachers, since it is all research in the field of agriculture, some of it of purely local interest, but all of it contributing to the accumulating agricultural science.

With this situation before us there is constant need of men who are training teachers in the Land Grant Colleges and state supervisors of agricultural education who will see to it that (1) teachers are so trained that they will keep up to date and (2) that constant revision of curriculums and courses of study and a general lengthening of the courses of study in agriculture will be made. Some of our courses are ridiculously short when the amount of technological material is considered.

## The Urban Drift Recedes

During the 20 years from 1910 to 1930, while the number of workers in other fields of employment increased by more than 50 per cent, the number of workers on farms decreased by some 17 per cent. The proportion of agricultural workers among workers in all occupations declined from 33.2 per cent or one-third in 1920 to 21.5 per cent or approximately one-fifth in 1930. It is apparent from census data that the urban drift of workers from farms to cities was in full flow during the two decades 1910 to 1930, where it ended. According to Miscellaneous Publication No. 157 of the United States Department of Agriculture, during this period labor on farms was becoming steadily more efficient, measured in product per man hour, largely as a result of increasing mechanization. Principally as a result of increasing use of tractors and trucks, acreage of harvested crops, for example, increased from an average per worker in 1910 of 26.5 acres to an average of 35.5 acres in 1930. To summarize what has been happening during this whole period since 1910, one may say that by using more tractors, trucks, and harvester threshers, and by substituting machine methods generally for hand methods, agriculture was able to release labor to our industrial and commercial centers in a period of rapidly increasing demand for labor in these fields of employment. The net drift from country to city may have continued on for a short time into the period of depression initiated by the crash in late 1929 with its aftermath of increasing unemployment in the urban communities, but the rising tide of unemployment in our industrial and commercial centers very soon reversed the flow. Now that is the situation. Do we have any responsibility of vocational training services? The inducting of thousands of migrants into farming, year in and year out, constitutes in my opinion one of the large responsibilities of vocational training in agriculture. This problem becomes acute in any period characterized, as recent years have been, by very large

population shifts between urban and rural communities. A million workers moving out from the city into the country in any year may present a million such individual problems of vocational adjustment.

Our program just now should recognize the fact that we need more information, local and state, in order that the adjustment and training may be effective. In addition we might well recognize and take part in the movement toward part-time or subsistence farming. The recent appropriation of \$25,000,000 for maintenance homes or farms is a step made necessary by the fact that there are millions of people now unemployed who cannot be reabsorbed in our industrial life.

The machine age, mass production, inventions, and change in methods of life and distribution have left many families stranded with little hope for a satisfying existence. It seems a proper charge on the Government to use public funds in developing a sound program of redistributing this population and of finding our unemployed industrial workers an opportunity to produce part of their income from small plots of land so located that they can be employed part time if the opportunity is afforded. Of course, the interests of agriculture must be protected in this new program by seeing that undesirable groups are not moved from the city to rural areas and that undue burdens are not placed on farm communities for educational facilities and poor relief. Modern conditions demand that an intelligent people shall give to all its citizens a chance in life.

#### *Geographic Shifts in Production Areas*

As an instance of the far-reaching consequences of research in modifying local types of farming, one may note that while 20 or 25 years ago no corn would ripen in Northern Minnesota because of the short growing season, recently varieties have been developed which can be grown there. Plant breeding has been extending the corn production areas and changing the farming business of many Northern Minnesota farmers.

The necessity for rotation after land has been subjected to one-crop farming also has in some instances caused excessive shifts in production areas. In parts of the Red River Valley, for example, where wheat has been grown exclusively, reduced yields and the necessity for weed control eventually made rotation necessary, and as a consequence of this necessity the acreage of potatoes has increased. Other small grains have been introduced, and livestock has come in. Almost an unlimited number of examples could be cited of changing types of farming in response to special demands for products originating in large urban centers—as for example, in the vicinity of Hadley, Massachusetts, where the demand of the Boston market for asparagus has given rise to greatly increased acreages of this crop. In recent years enough tractors and trucks have displaced horses on farms to set free about 55,000,000 acres of land formerly used for feed crops. This change has affected almost all parts of the United States and has resulted in

many changes in types of farm businesses.

Transportation developments have affected widespread changes in types of farming carried on in certain areas. A tomato area in Copiah County, Mississippi, for example, was developed as one effect of the improved facilities for shipment of this product to the Chicago market. The problems of marketing are becoming increasingly complex, induced by transportation facilities, availability of refrigerator cars, and market demands.

Leaders of the cotton South have assured the Secretary of Agriculture that next year they will not plant cotton in the unlimited, planless way they have in the past. Instead of planting around 40,000,000 acres to cotton, it seems likely that we shall put in only about 25,000,000 acres next spring. The Agricultural Adjustment Administration of the United States Department of Agriculture in recent months put before 1,200,000 American farm families that grow wheat a proposal to reduce wheat crops as much as one-fifth for the next 2 years. Frankly, men, I ask you what are we going to do about these new developments and adjustments in agriculture. I presume every man here is familiar with the monograph we are preparing, in cooperation with the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, on the utilization of land and labor affected by various commodity acreage reduction programs. We need clear thinking just now and the kind of efficiency that strikes down to fundamentals and builds from there. Farmers within the patronage area of every department of vocational agriculture are entitled to educational assistance with the stirring problems of agriculture confronting them day by day. Shall we rise to the occasion?

#### *Development of Live-at-Home Program*

With the surging up of unemployment in industrial centers during the past few years and the back flow of hundreds of thousands of families into the country, something more than the problem of technical farming for a profit under intensely competitive conditions has emerged in the field of vocational agriculture, something vastly more urgent, since it involves not simply the technique of farming, but rather the whole technique of living at all for these industrial workers who have brought with them into the country small, if any, resources in the way of financial assets or experience. As a first move in their regeneration they must be taught to live off the farm. When they have learned to do this, the problem of helping them to make something more than a bare subsistence living will of course be taken up.

In its broader aspects the problem of the urban family which has drifted back into the country is a problem of developing for this family a live-at-home program and technique of the conditions where the tendency is for farmers generally to farm more for a market and less for home consumption.

Whatever may be sound economics in this live-at-home program for the established, experienced farmer, the displaced urban family which has drifted out into the country must be helped

first, it seems to me, to live off the farm independently of the market. Perhaps the first thing they should be taught is the growing and preserving of food for themselves rather than growing, picking, and shipping for the market. In general, they must be taught to do many of those very things which the well-to-do, prosperous, aggressive, intelligent farmer has found it, or thinks he has found it, not worth his while to bother about. In any case for these newcomers in rural communities the live-at-home program may be the only feasible program for living at all either at home or anywhere else. This program obviously breaks over from the field of vocational agriculture into the field of home economics. It is in fact a joint farm and home program.

#### *Making Farming a Worthwhile Career*

After all is said and done, and looking at the situation as it now exists, face to face, the problem presented by changing social and economic conditions is in general the problem of doing more extensively for all farm boys and farmers what has been done and is being done for some farm boys and farmers in some localities. It is a problem of expansion of services being rendered rather than of material modification in the character of these services. The increase in enrolments in all-day and day-unit classes last year was not quite up to the usual increase in past years. However, we did reach last year 165,792 boys and girls through systematic instruction in agriculture. There was a slight increase in the part-time group enrolment—12,443 for 1933. The enrolment in evening classes dropped slightly over last year or the previous year. We reached only 74,546 farmers, or a total, in all types of classes, of 252,781.

There is of course no cut and dried procedure for building farming into a worthwhile career for any farmer or farm boy, but the responsibility for doing this is fundamental in programs of vocational education in agriculture. The responsibility does not terminate with the organized instruction and supervised practice provided under the local program. For the boy who has served his apprenticeship on the home farm and buys or rents a farm to operate on his own, part-time instruction should be provided which may mean success in farming rather than failure.

Owen D. Young told the National Education Association in connection with rural school developments that "in the near future the country may be the land of culture. The provincials will live only in the cities." Be that as it may, we surely are living in a new day. Among the forces that have broken through the one-time isolation of country living are good roads, the telephone, the radio, and motion pictures; all these facilitate the hoped-for redistribution of population from congested cities to rural areas. The electrical industry, by wider transmission or more scattered generating of power, raises a hope both for decentralization of industry and more electrification of farms. The rustic may command inventions, labor-saving and space annihilating devices, that is, if he has the money, and farm relief efforts

(Continued on page 125)



# Evening Schools



## Teaching Farm Organization to Evening School Groups

R. H. WOODS, University of Kentucky, Lexington



R. H. Woods

**W**ARREN made the statement many years ago that "more farmers fail because of poor farm organization than because of poor production." All of us have known farmers to make a profit from one enterprise and then lose it because of inefficiency in some other enterprise. Few farmers are above average in their efficiency in all the enterprises. Teachers of agriculture can do most for the economic well-being of the farmers with whom they work by getting the farmers to adopt practices that will result in larger earnings from the entire farm business. One of the weaknesses in our evening program has been carried over from our all-day program, namely, careless preparation or lack of preparation.

**G**etting Ready for the Evening School  
About a year ago I asked a teacher how much time he spent in getting ready for his evening school course. He replied that he spent very little. This teacher continued his comment by saying, "Last year I called the farmers together and asked them what they wanted to study. I found quite a diversity of interest. As they indicated the problems they wished to consider, I listed them on the board. After this I asked which problem we should consider first. There was considerable difference of opinion, but we finally decided to consider 'what is our most profitable crop?' Decisions were based on the opinions of the farmers assembled." This pure conference procedure may work in some instances. It is my candid opinion, however, that any teacher of agriculture needs to make much and thorough preparation for an evening school, and especially an evening school in farm organization. A farmer, as well as anyone else, needs facts, and in most cases new facts, in order to reach intelligent, valid decisions. The teacher will be expected to furnish needed facts which the farmers cannot furnish. A careful analysis of the problems to be attacked must be made by the teacher, in order that he may know what facts to assemble. Farmers will not be greatly interested or permanently changed by the teacher's opinion or the opinions of other farmers. They want facts and deserve to have facts. In getting ready to teach an evening school in farm organization, the

task of the teacher is somewhat analogous to that of a physician. Physicians usually insist on a complete examination, to get facts.

A farm business is not as complex as the human body, but it is more complex than many people realize. The farmer and the teacher working with him on reorganizing his farm do not need facts about farming in general, but they must have facts on the farmer's business. In going anywhere, we must start from where we are. Before the teacher can direct the farmer in improving his farm organization, he must know the present status of the farm business. The farmer, in most cases, is not aware of the weaknesses in his farm set-up. The teacher needs to get all the information he can about the farm business. Form 120 prepared by the Division of Farm Management of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics may be used as a survey blank to record needed information on the farmer's business.

### Taking the Surveys

Teachers should visit prospective evening school farmers, especially 20-25 of those most likely to attend the evening school, and get records of their farm businesses. The teacher should begin taking these surveys at least six weeks before he expects to call the farmers together for group instruction. The surveys should be taken early, preferably in December, as the farm business year corresponds fairly closely to the calendar year. It will be necessary to exercise patience and care in taking the surveys. Most farmers keep few records. However, if the farmer is given time, he can recall fairly accurately what he had a year ago, what he has bought, and what he has sold. Certainly the farm business record which the teacher may obtain from the farmer is much better than no record at all. The teacher should be informed on fair charges for depreciation, etc. Teachers of agriculture in Kentucky have used the following depreciation charges, with variation to suit individual cases: Dwelling 2 per cent, tenant houses and other buildings 3 per cent, fences 5 per cent, and machinery 10 per cent.

As each survey record is obtained, the necessary calculations should be made and the results copied on the Farm Analysis Sheet. See next page. Size, balance, production, and labor efficiency are four major factors influencing income from the farm business. On the Farm Analysis Sheet measures of each major efficiency factor have been grouped under that factor. As soon as all surveys have been copied on the analysis sheet, the sheets should be ar-

ranged in order of labor income.

The common practice among farm management workers in making reports of farm business analysis is to average all farms, average the high ten, average the low ten, on the various measures of the efficiency factors, and show the strong factors of the high ten and weak factors of the low ten. I suggest that we deviate slightly from our accustomed practice and select from among the high five farms the farm that compares most favorably with the largest number of farms in the community as to acreage, topography, and type of farming. Select from among the low five the farm which most nearly approaches the farm selected from among the high five in acreage, topography, and type of farming. A reason for selecting two actual farms rather than dealing with averages is that our first ultimate objective is to get each farmer to make a farm budget. The meetings would be much too heterogeneous in character if we tried to set up a budget with each farmer during the 12-15 group meetings. It is better to work with a real, rather than a hypothetical farm business.

In order to make this discussion more concrete let us look at a few facts revealed by the analysis of two representative farms selected and used by a teacher of agriculture in central Kentucky last year. These farms happened to be number 13 and 14 in the survey. For the sake of brevity the unprofitable farm will be referred to as farm 14.

	Representative Profitable Farm, Number 13	Representative Unprofitable Farm, Number 14
Total acres.....	92	94
Crops.....		
Tobacco.....	9	10
Corn.....	3	4
Wheat.....	6	
Oats.....		6
Hay.....	14	6
Livestock.....		
Dairy cows.....	6	9
Sheep.....	45	31
Sows.....	1	4
Hens.....	70	100
Work stock.....	3	3
Total receipts.....	\$2,718	\$1,928
Total expenses.....	1,263	1,503
Farm income.....	1,455	425
Interest on investment.....	576	738
Labor income.....	879	-313
Net earnings.....	1,492	367
Yields.....		
Tobacco, pounds.....	1,333	1,000
Corn, bushels.....	66	50
Receipts.....		
Per dairy cow.....	\$47.33	\$15.78
Per sow.....	66.00	9.00
Per ewe.....	11.03	5.06
Hired labor.....	65.00	400.00

The teacher should compare the representative high farm and the representative low farm on the different measures of efficiency listed on the Farm Analysis Sheet, and pick out the weaknesses of the farm returning the minus labor income.

Weaknesses in farm organization denote that there are managerial practices which need to be improved. From these weaknesses one should be able to determine the content of the evening course. This course is, or should be, designed to produce changes in farmers. After knowing the practices which need to be improved, the teacher should plan a course that will give the farmers the knowledge and attitudes necessary to correct these weaknesses. The teacher discovered the following weaknesses in the representative unprofitable farm:

1. Crops not wisely chosen
2. Low crop yields, especially in important crops
3. Animal enterprises not wisely chosen
4. Low production per animal unit
5. Hiring too much labor
6. Poor labor efficiency
7. Not enough fruits and vegetables raised for family use

Not all farms with low labor incomes will have the same weaknesses as this farm business. On the other hand, it is quite probable that enough of the weaknesses will be common to all farm business of the community to justify group instruction as one step in an effort to encourage the adoption of improved farm practices.

#### *Teaching the Course*

(See suggested outline of the course, at end of this discussion.) In beginning group instruction, one should keep in mind that the only contact the farmers have had with the evening course, so far, is that they have furnished certain information about their farm businesses. In view of this fact, it seems that the first task of the teacher is to get the farmers to decide on the conditions affecting farm earnings which can be controlled by the farmer. The four conditions which determine whether a farm is profitable or unprofitable are soil, climatic conditions, price and market conditions, and the way the farm is organized and managed. However, with similar soil conditions, similar climatic conditions, and the same market conditions, some farmers make a profit and others fail to make ends meet. During the first meeting of the evening school group, the teacher should endeavor to get the farmers to see the great importance of farm organization. The range and distribution of labor incomes from their own farms should bring forth a decision that the way the farm is organized has much to do with the farmer's financial well-being. As soon as this decision is made, the group should proceed to find out why some farms return a profit and others do not. As previously suggested, this may be most effectively accomplished by comparing a representative high farm with a representative low farm. The analysis of the representative high and representative low farms should be placed on a large chart. Allow the farmers to study these two farm businesses and to pick

## FARM ANALYSIS SHEET

Total receipts.....	_____
Total expenses.....	_____
Farm income.....	_____
Family living from farm.....	_____
Total investment.....	_____
Interest on investment.....	_____
Labor income.....	_____
Net earnings.....	_____

#### SIZE—

Productive man work units.....	_____
Productive horse work units.....	_____
Acres operated.....	_____
Acres of crops.....	_____
Acres pastured.....	_____
Number of dairy cows (average).....	_____
Productive animal units.....	_____
Man equivalent.....	_____

#### BALANCE—

Pasture acres per animal unit.....	_____
Acres of crops per animal unit.....	_____
Crop man work units per acre of crops.....	_____
Labor distribution.....	_____
Per cent of receipts from crops.....	_____

#### Receipts from important enterprises:

.....	_____
.....	_____

#### PRODUCTION—

Crop index (based on county yields).....	_____
Pounds of tobacco per acre.....	_____
Bushels of corn per acre.....	_____
Pounds of milk per cow.....	_____
Eggs per hen.....	_____
Lambs saved per ewe.....	_____
Pigs saved per sow.....	_____

#### LABOR EFFICIENCY—

Productive man work units per man.....	_____
Acres of crops per man.....	_____
Animal units, except work animals, per man.....	_____
Productive horse work units per work animal.....	_____

#### RECEIPTS—

Price per pound of tobacco.....	_____
Receipts per dairy cow.....	_____
Beef cattle increase and net sales per head.....	_____
Receipts per hen.....	_____
Receipts per sow.....	_____
Receipts per ewe.....	_____

#### EXPENSES—

Hired labor.....	_____
Feed bought.....	_____
Cropper labor.....	_____
Unpaid family labor.....	_____
Seed.....	_____
Taxes.....	_____
Insurance.....	_____
Depreciation on buildings and machinery.....	_____

#### Total expenses.....

FARM-FURNISHED ITEMS FOR FAMILY USE—	
Crops.....	_____
Vegetables.....	_____
Fruits.....	_____
Meat.....	_____
Poultry and eggs.....	_____
Milk and butter.....	_____
Fuel.....	_____
Rent (10 per cent of value of dwelling).....	_____
Total farm-furnished items.....	_____

out the weaknesses of the unprofitable farm. As weaknesses are agreed upon, they should be written on the board.

The group should meet for approximately 90 minutes. Lesson two should begin where the first lesson ended, and so on. As soon as the group has decided upon the important weaknesses, it should begin to correct the weaknesses and ultimately set up a budget, sound from the standpoint of farm organization. Farmers will discover essentially the same weaknesses the teacher has discovered, granting that the teacher had done a good job. The first weakness in the list mentioned was that the crops are not wisely chosen. If the cropping program is not what it should be, an attempt should be made to correct this weakness before attempting to correct other weaknesses.

The first thing to do in making a farm budget is to set up a cropping program. Therefore, the second main division of the course outline is "Deciding on the Crops to Grow." A farmer should grow all he can of his most profitable cash crop. In keeping with this principle, then, the next problem may be stated as "What cash crops should he grow?" Notice that the pronoun *he* is used, because we are attempting to make a budget for the farmer who is operating the representative unprofitable farm. There are four factors which should be considered before an intelligent decision can be reached on what cash crops to grow. These factors are listed in the suggested course outline at the end of this discussion. Factor 1 needs little explanation. Getting the facts on factor 2 will take much more time. The farmers have little accurate knowledge on production costs. Costs vary from community to community.

One way to get at production costs in a particular community or on a particular farm is to take an average production cost, with all the items of cost, and proceed by conference to adjust the figures up or down to fit a particular situation. For example, if the cost of feed in producing milk should be raised, raise it; if it should be lowered, lower it. Where all of the items have been adjusted, the total of the adjusted figures will be a fair production cost for the particular situation. Since the farmer has helped arrive at the cost of production, he will accept it.

Before leaving cost of production, it will be necessary to decide on the yields to strive for. Emphasis should be put on the relation between cost and yields. The best farmers get yields from one-fifth to one-third higher than the average. The yield to be attained, the manuring and fertilizing practices necessary to attain these yields, and the quantity and value of fertilizer to be used should be decided and recorded on the budget forms. (The budget forms are not here shown. Suggested forms can be had from almost any farm management department.) All budget forms should be drawn off on a large chart for class use. As budget decisions are reached, the figures should be copied on the large budget forms.

The procedure suggested for predicting price was suggested and used by I. W. Duggan of Mississippi A. and M. College. Charts showing the

influence of supply and demand on price may be obtained from the U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

The Department of Markets and Rural Finance in our institution has cooperated with us in acquainting the teachers of agriculture with the price outlook for the year ahead. Teachers should understand that they are not telling farmers what prices they may expect, but instead are furnishing information and guiding the farmer in making a more intelligent prediction than he usually makes.

Keep in mind that the group should come out with a decision on the kind and amount of cash crops to grow. Furthermore, decisions should be recorded on the proper sheet of the budget forms.

The decision on what cash crops to grow on farm 14 was to grow 9 acres of tobacco, of which the tenant was to have 4 acres. After a decision has been reached on the kind and amount of cash crops to be grown, the next problem should be "What feed crops should he grow?" The teacher and the farmers have the problem of fitting feed crops into a rotation with cash crops, already selected, in such a way that soil fertility may be maintained or restored and that feed may be provided for the livestock to be kept. Few farmers give enough attention to a systematic rotation. It may be well to have charted a half dozen characteristics of a good cropping system, in order that the farmers may have more information to use in deciding on a suitable rotation. On farm 14, 90 of the 94 acres may be included in the rotation. In view of the size of the farm, the fertility of the soil, and the relatively large acreage in tobacco, the decision reached by the teacher and the farmers was to use a 6-year rotation.

The margin between cost of production and farm value may be determined after a decision has been reached on cost of production and the probable farm value of different feed crops. The procedures suggested for finding the production cost and for predicting prices of cash crops are equally applicable to feed crops.

In rendering a decision on "What feed crops should he grow?" the group should consider the labor required for different crops. The extent which feed crops compete with each other and with cash crops for labor must be considered. The teacher should have a large chart showing an adequate labor distribution on a well-balanced farm business, and a chart showing the labor distribution on the representative unprofitable farm. The labor hours required for each enterprise should be copied on the large form prepared for that purpose. Between meetings the teacher should make a vertical bar chart of the labor distribution worked out by the group. This will enable the farmers to visualize the labor distribution they have set up for the representative farm.

As soon as the cropping program has been set up, the next task is to decide on the kind and number of animals to be kept. One of the outstanding weaknesses on the representative unprofitable farm is a very low production per

animal unit. As stated before, in going anywhere we must start from where we are. Each farmer already has a livestock program. Some farms will be overstocked, some understocked. The problem suggested is "What livestock should he keep."

The returns to be expected from different livestock enterprises will have most influence on the kind and amount of livestock the farmer keeps. The cost of keeping an animal and the cost per unit of product may be determined by following the procedure suggested for crops. The procedure suggested for predicting the price of crops may be used equally well with animal enterprises.

Feed requirements and feeds available are factors to be reckoned with. The group will have already discussed feed requirements, in arriving at cost of production. The quantity of feed available is already known. The task is to balance the amount needed and the amount available. Suppose we look at the existing situation on the representative unprofitable farm. This farmer had 9 cows, 100 hens, 31 ewes, and 4 brood sows to feed. The only grain he had to feed all his livestock was 200 bushels of corn. Cows should have 18 to 20 bushels each, and each sow, if she raised one average litter, would require more than 100 bushels of corn. The farmer needed more than 700 bushels of corn. It is quite apparent that he was attempting to keep too much livestock, especially too many sows.

One of the first moves in adjusting the livestock on this farm was to get rid of three brood sows. In view of the return to be expected and the other factors, the final decision was to keep 7 cows and sell the 2 least profitable cows, keep 1 sow, keep 100 hens, and to keep his best heifer calves for replacement. The budget set up included 2 heifers and 1 calf. It was assumed that the 9 acres of barley would make 315 bushels, and the 6 acres of corn 300 bushels. Assuming that barley will take the place of corn, there would be 584 bushels of grain to be fed. According to the budget this farmer would need 580 bushels. The pasture needed was estimated to be 43 acres; the quantity available was 45 acres, not counting the rye. It was estimated that the livestock would consume 13,000 pounds of stover; the estimated production was 15,000. The estimated production of alfalfa was 2½ tons per acre, or approximately 34 tons. Of this 26 tons will be needed for the livestock. If the yield holds up, there will be a surplus of 8 tons of hay. Six tons of this hay may be sold to help pay for feed, lime, and fertilizer bought.

Let us now see the results of the budget set up for farm 14. Last year this farm returned a labor income of minus \$313. According to the budget set up for 1933, the farmer would make a labor income of \$780. The increased returns from the proposed budget over the present set-up would be \$1,093. The proposed budget is more or less an ideal to work toward and cannot be adopted in every detail the first year. It will be impossible to have a field of alfalfa to cut for hay, until 1934. What this farmer actually did was to seed alfalfa in the field already seeded to wheat and rye,

and seed 3 acres of the soybeans in the field to be planted to corn and tobacco in 1934 to supply hay needed for the winter 33-34. The soybeans were harvested in August, and the field immediately seeded to rye. This farmer realized more for his lambs than was predicted in the budget. The predicted price was \$6.50 per hundred, and he sold his lambs for \$8.10. On the other hand, bran, cottonseed meal, and tankage advanced in price. It is felt that the group was sufficiently conservative in estimating the returns expected.

One weakness of farm 14 was that not enough fruits and vegetables was raised. Many farmers with the present situation, give too little attention to raising food for the family. You will note that this problem is stated, "Should this farmer increase the food provided by the farm?"

So far, all suggestions concerning group instruction have centered around the improvement of farm 14, the representative unprofitable farm. As already stated, the value of the evening course will depend upon the kind of budget set up and followed by each farmer. The teacher should assist each farmer in setting up his budget and in adopting the improved practices proposed.

After a farmer makes a budget, he should be interested in keeping a record to see how well his predictions turn out and to know how to improve on his budget the succeeding year. Division V of the course is entitled, "What records should farmers keep?"

The farm management departments in colleges of agriculture have prepared farm account books suited to the needs of farmers in the states. Too few farmers have kept accurate records. Perhaps the reason farmers are careless about records is that they do not fully appreciate the function of records and that they do not know how to keep them. Evening school group instruction should not cease until farmers appreciate the value of records and know how to keep them.

Let me summarize briefly what I have tried to say. The first thing to do is to get a survey of each farmer's farm business. The second thing to do is to analyze this business, in order to discover the weaknesses. Third, set up a course designed to give the farmers the knowledge and attitudes needed to correct the weaknesses. Group instruction may center around an individual farm. Fourth, the ultimate objective is to get each farmer to set up and follow a farm budget. The fifth and last suggestion is to get each farmer to keep a farm record in order that he may know how his budget actually turns out.

The budget becomes the farm practice plan to be executed by the farmer. The teacher's job, after the budget is made, is to see that the farmer carries out the improved practices he has planned to carry out.

#### **Evening Course Outline in Farm Organization**

- I. *Approaching the Study of Farm Organization*
  - A. What conditions determine the earnings of a farm? (These con-

ditions are to be drawn from the farmers.) They are:

1. Soil conditions.
2. Climatic conditions.
3. Price and market conditions.
4. The way the farm is organized and managed.

B. Can we as farmers influence or control these conditions? (Answers to be drawn from farmers.)

We can influence 1 and 3. We can neither control nor influence 2. We can control 4.

C. How important is farm organization?

1. Range or variation in labor incomes.

(Chart and have available: distribution of labor incomes from the farms included in survey, a chart from any farm management study showing a wide range in labor income due to good and poor farm organization and management.)

D. Why do some farms pay more than others?

(Chart the analyses of the representative high and low farms on the same chart. Allow the farmers to pick out the weaknesses of the unprofitable farm.)

1. Weaknesses of unprofitable farm.

#### 11. Deciding on the Crops to Grow.

*Approach:* In studying the weaknesses of farm 14, it was decided that this farmer had not chosen his crops wisely. If you were in his place what would you grow?

A. What cash crops should be grown?

1. Cash crops which may be grown.

- a. Now grown.
- b. Others adapted to this community.

2. Cost of producing different cash crops.

- a. Cost per acre.
- b. Cost per unit.
- c. Relation of yield to cost.

3. Price outlook for different cash crops.

- a. Present price.
- 1) Compare with past prices.
- 2) Compare with price of other farm products.

- b. Supply.
- 1) Current production.
- 2) Supplies in storage.

- c. Demand.
- 1) Disappearance or consumption.

- d. Other factors affecting price.
- 1) Collective bargaining.
- 2) New Deal.

4. Facilities for growing different cash crops.

- a. Land.
- b. Equipment.
- c. Labor.

Come out with decision on kind and amount of cash crops to grow.

B. What feed crops should he grow?

*Approach:* In attempting to decide

on feed crops to be grown, keep in mind that crops are grown primarily to utilize land and labor. The cropping system should provide for restoration and maintenance of soil fertility and for the needs of livestock to be kept.

1. What is a desirable rotation?

- a. Characteristics of a good cropping system.

- 1) Cash crops have been decided upon.

- b. Other factors which should determine length of a rotation.

- 1) Size of farm.

- 2) Tillable land.

- 3) Kind and quantity of livestock.

- 4) Value of land.

2. Margin between cost of production and farm value of different feed crops.

- a. Cost of producing different feed crops.

- 1) Cost per acre.

- 2) Cost per unit.

- 3) Relationship between yield and cost.

- 4) Yields to strive for and how attain.

- b. Probable farm prices of different feed crops.

- 1) Present farm price.

- a. Compare with past prices.

- b. Compare with prices of other farm products.

- 2) Supply.

- a. Current production.

- b. Amount carried over.

- c. Influence of supply on price.

- 3) Demand.

- a. Past and probable consumption.

- b. Influence of demand on price.

- 4) Other factors affecting price.

3. Labor required for different crops.

- a. Quantity and distribution of man and horse labor.

- 1) Competing crops.

- b. Relation between labor utilization and farm earnings.

- 1) Ways of increasing labor efficiency.

- a. Increasing size of business.

- b. More adequate use of machinery.

- c. Improving farm layout.

#### III. What Livestock Should He Keep?

*Approach:* On most farms livestock serves as a means of marketing feed crops, and provides for utilization of labor.

A. Livestock now on the farm.

B. Probable returns from different livestock enterprises.

1. Cost of production.

- a. Per animal.

- b. Per unit of product.

- c. Relation of production per animal to cost of

production.

2. Probable price.

- a. Present price.

- 1) Compare with past prices.

- 2) Compare with price of other farm products.

- b. Supply.

- 1) Number of animals on farms and trends in number.
- 2) Quantity of products on hand.

- c. Demand.

- 1) Domestic consumption.
- 2) Exports.

- d. Other factors affecting price.

3. Disposition to be made of products.

- a. Market opportunities.

- C. Feed requirements of different animal enterprises.

- D. Feeds available.

- E. Labor required for different animals.

1. Quantity and distribution.

- F. Facilities, such as fence, buildings, and equipment.

- G. Available capital with which to make changes in livestock program.

#### IV. Should This Farmer Increase the Food Provided by the Farm?

*Approach:* With the ratio of prices received to prices paid yet below 70, it behoves the farmer to produce as much food as possible. By increasing the production of feed for the family, the cash outlay for family expenditures may be materially reduced.

- A. Food now provided by the farm.

- B. Food requirements of average farm family.

- C. Food requirements which should be produced on the farm.

#### V. What Records Should Farmers Keep?

*Approach:* In trying to fill out the farm survey, many of us felt the need for more reliable information on our farm businesses. Many farmers have felt that they would keep necessary records in their heads and on the calendar. Farmers who have kept records say that less than five minutes a day is required to keep a good farm record.

- A. Function of records.

1. Steering wheel of the farm.

2. A record will enable us to check on the budget we have set up, and helps a farmer to find out what combination of enterprises is best suited to his farm.

- B. Kind of records needed.

1. Inventory.

2. Expenditures.

3. Labor.

4. Sales record.

5. Feed record.

6. Crop yields.

7. Animal production.

Dr. Sherman Dickinson, who has been on Sabbatical leave of absence this fall, has returned home. He spent the past quarter at Teachers College in New York City, auditing courses and otherwise picking up ideas.

### Nolan Screenings

A FEW years ago I spoke in the June conference on "Marginal Factors Determining a Teacher's Success." These thoughts are running through my mind again, as I hear of the failures of some of our teachers of agriculture. Agriculture men can understand the meaning of "margins" as ascribed to the profits of the farmer. You know that it is his margins that make him successful or unsuccessful in his business. It is the plus factors that count for profit. It is so with teachers of vocational agriculture. I mean by "margins" in a teacher, those things not usually considered in his school training in technical agriculture, and professional training; those things not measured by grades and credit hours; items not certified in license or diploma; factors not necessarily evident in personal interviews. I am thinking of certain elements of personality, qualities of character, habits of conduct, attitudes of mind, and common-sense factors, which give color and tone to a man's life among his fellows. I shall have space merely to name and group some of these marginal factors. There are "margins in education"—the plus in knowledge which gives assurance and confidence. The "margins in appreciation," which causes a man to understand and appreciate his situations and every personal contact the teacher of agriculture has. The "margins in courtesy," which enable a man to get along well with people, because he bears genuine good will and practices the graces of society. The "margins of character"—by which a teacher keeps himself unspotted from evil, yet deigns not to serve his fellow men in all walks of life.

—The Fan Mill, Illinois.

### Use Parent-Teacher Meeting to Sell Vocational Agriculture in Your Community

N. M. Hunt, Instructor in Vocational Agriculture, Richmond, Indiana

EACH community supporting a vocational agriculture department is confronted with the problem of tax reduction and at the same time maintaining a teaching staff of quality and efficiency.

The work of the vocational agriculture department is looked upon many times as one of the less important training units of the school system. It is frequently called a "frill." Because of this general feeling toward agricultural education, it becomes our task as representatives of this important phase of rural education to bring before our school patrons and taxpayers some definite reasons for maintaining a department in the local high school.

The writer has tried the following plan and found it helpful in bringing before the patrons of his school a more definite and concrete picture of the vocational program for the future farmers.

Our school is fortunate in having a very active Parent Teachers' Association. It becomes our privilege as a vocational department to furnish one monthly program each year. This program gives our department a splendid opportunity to present our vocational training objectives. The following pro-

gram was the one in which we participated recently:

1. Music.....School Orchestra
2. P. T. A.....Business Meeting
3. Music.....School Orchestra
4. A fifteen-minute talk by the vocational agriculture instructor presenting: "Twelve Training Objectives in Vocational Agricultural Education."
- Reference: (Bulletin No. 153, Agricultural Series No. 39, Federal Board for Vocational Education)
5. Three-minute demonstrations by members of the vocational agriculture department.
  - a. Farm Layout
  - b. Study of Hog Prices
  - c. Types of Farming in Indiana
  - d. Labor Distribution on an 80-Acre Farm in This Community
  - e. Soil Testing
  - f. Value of Livestock Judging to Me, by a member of the Champion State Dairy Judging Team
  - Exhibition of the Silver Cup by the Team
6. What are School Essentials? . . . A H. Hines, County Superintendent of Schools

The six demonstrations with the aid of charts and drawing showed how our teaching tends to help vocational boys attain the major part of these twelve objectives, and developed a new appreciation on the part of the school patrons of the character of the vocational agriculture training program.

### Adjusting Vocational Agriculture to Changing Conditions

(Continued from page 120)

are trying to help him get the money; but is it to be assumed that either an increase of leisure or wealth is assurance of a rise of culture? Hardly. Whether in city or country the result depends on the use to which the time and means are put. Probably the reason why so many place hope in a rural culture is that to them the country signifies peacefulness and quietude. Quiet meditation on the hillside is likely to tap deeper wells of culture than fast driving in an 8-cylinder roadster. To convey to the country the hurry of the city would be the opposite of gain. Rural culture should mean the improvement in intellectual avocations and the graces of living, and if it is to retain its present essence, it should include its need of leisure for contemplation.

We need some thoughtful consideration of our curriculum to meet this new trend in our social structure. "Far more important than teaching children how to farm is teaching them how to be happy on a farm."\*

\*Paradox in Hawaii, by President Crawford, University of Hawaii.

In sending in subscriptions to the magazine, please indicate new subscriptions and renewals, with any change in address of renewals.

### Consumers' Cooperative Store

ALLEN M. EMERSON, Vocational Agriculture Teacher, Albion, Indiana

WITH the prospect of our public, in the future, purchasing commodities handled mostly by their own cooperative associations, it is well for the future citizens of the community to have some experience that teaches the fundamental ideas of consumers' co-operation. For example, such ideas as; One vote for each member of the organization; interest, if interest is paid, at not more than the current legal rate; a return of surplus earnings to consumers in proportion to their patronage, or for the social good of the group; and the secondary principles of unrestricted membership, sales at current prices, educational policy, sale to non-members as well as to members, and adequate reserves to protect the business.

Last September the advanced agriculture group of the high school agreed upon some general principles and drew up a set of by-laws. "The Albion High School Consumers' Cooperative Association" became the name of the organization. The officers provided for and elected were a board of five directors from the membership at large, a president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer, elected from the directors.

The board of directors chose a business manager to purchase supplies and to be in charge of the store.

A share of stock, as originally sold, was 10 cents. For the protection of the association no share could be withdrawn until after at least a two-month period. The stock could be sold by transferring through the secretary. At graduation, senior members will be repaid the value of original stock purchased plus accumulated value.

Any purchaser at the store receives a rebate of 5 per cent of purchases. These rebates accumulate toward shares of stock. Anyone owning stock becomes a member of the association. Thus the membership of the organization will steadily increase.

The first share of stock was sold September 26. Soon the amount for the shares sold became \$2.20, and business was started by purchasing a few apples and oranges. These were sold at 2 cents and 5 cents, to allow profit and patronage dividends. Athletic supports and gym socks for physical education students were later purchased.

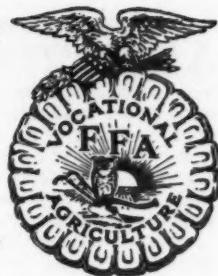
The total of the sales to date is \$21, and cash rebate value \$1.05. Four dollars have been deposited in the bank, and store supplies are replaced as sold.

Recently an amusing incident occurred which showed the boys just how their organization was operating. One member wished to purchase a pair of 17-cent socks. He owned two shares of stock for which he had paid 10 cents each. These shares he sold for the amount which he needed to purchase the socks. Later the treasurer and another member of the organization computed the actual accumulated value of the two shares and found it to be 44 cents.

Probably the success of the venture will soon lead to the handling of tablets, pencils, books, and all other school supplies through a consumers' cooperative store at Albion High School.



# Future Farmers of America



## The Vergennes, Vermont, F. F. A. Chapter Gets Under Way

HOWARD MARTIN, Adviser, Vergennes

**I**N September, during the second week of school, Vergennes Chapter, Vermont, sponsored a corn roast, which was attended by one hundred boys and girls. There was no expense connected with this event, as the boys furnished the corn, and the wood was collected from a near-by lot. This waste wood was brought to the athletic field where the corn roast was held.

In October the F. F. A. put on a school fair which was unusually successful. The fair was held in the Community Building, or High School Gym, on a Friday afternoon and evening.

The president of the F. F. A. took charge of the exhibits and appointed committees to attend to the various other activities. Anyone in school was allowed to exhibit any crop, poultry, or pets grown or cared for during the past year. The exhibits of fruit and vegetables were displayed on the bleachers which were covered with white paper. The vegetables were on the left of the main entrance, while on the right were many rows of canned goods exhibited by the home economics department.

The poultry and egg exhibits were downstairs. For the exhibitions of fowls, the boys secured a number of poultry coops from the Middlebury Fair Association. This exhibit was one of the largest and best ever seen in the county.

For entertainment the F. F. A. "cowboys" put on several numbers both afternoon and evening. These were well received. A local male quartet sang several songs which, in quality of singing, probably far surpassed that of the boys but won no greater applause. As a finale for the entertainment, the high school girls put on a mock football game which ended in a tie. (red necktie)

As to money making, which was not the chief aim, the boys did not fare so badly. The net profit was \$66. An admission fee of 5 cents was charged which netted over \$30. Cider and doughnuts were sold at one booth; ice-cream and cake were served at small tables. At another booth the hungry could procure luscious popcorn balls. At still another, one might win a pencil by throwing baseballs into a bucket.

However, the most popular attraction was the side-show held in one of the dressing rooms. Here was assembled a collection of the Wonders of the World, including the following: a human head without a body; the perfect lovers; Tarzan, the apeman; half man and half woman; and also the largest baby in the world.

The work of planning, preparing, and running the fair was all done by the agriculture class. Not only did the members learn many things but they had a mighty good time.

In November the P. T. A. of Vergennes sponsored a school at night. Regular classes were conducted for two full-length periods, and an assembly program was presented. At this assembly the F. F. A. carried out a regular meeting, as outlined in the Manual, and also initiated the Green Hands.

The officers of the association are good, honest, hardworking boys but not what you would call good speechmakers. While not perfect, these boys did a splendid job of the ceremony, surprising the faculty with the earnest, businesslike way in which they performed.

At this meeting, in addition to the regular school attendance of about 240, there were about 225 guests. The entire group seemed to get a kick out of this assembly program. The boys, too, enjoyed it.

*As we go to press, word comes that Blue Boy is dead. Watch for write-up in next issue.*

## Jeffers Honored at Vocational Banquet

P. C. BROOK, Principal, State Secondary Agricultural School, Wetumpka, Alabama

**A**T THE Father-Son-Mother-Daughter banquet given jointly by the Wetumpka chapter Future Farmers of America and the department of vocational home economics at the State Secondary Agricultural School at Wetumpka recently, Hon. Lamar Jeffers, representative in congress from the fourth Alabama district, was presented a key signifying election to the degree of State Farmer by the executive committee of the state organization of Future Farmers of America.

Mr. Jeffers is the first congressman to be presented with this honor by the Alabama organization of F. F. A. The honor is in recognition for Mr. Jeffers' outstanding work in congress in fighting for vocational work when efforts were being made to withdraw federal funds for this type of training.

In his talk to the group of about seventy boys and girls in vocational home economics and agriculture and about fifty fathers and mothers and other guests, Mr. Jeffers stressed the importance of boys' and girls' taking up early in life the challenge of the future. He further stated his great faith in vocational training for boys and girls.

The banquet was presided over by a student in vocational agriculture. The program included, besides the address by Mr. Jeffers, an outline of the objectives of the F. F. A. and some of the accomplishments of the Wetumpka chapter last year, by the past president; this year's objectives, by the president for the coming year; the programs of vocational home economics and agriculture at Wetumpka, by Miss Sarah Stevenson, teacher of vocational home economics, and T. H. LeCroy, teacher of vocational agriculture; and music and stunts, by members of the student group.



*American Farmers, Future Farmers of America, recently approved*

# Why Be A Farmer?

(Winning Speech in Public Speaking Contest at Kansas City)

ALBERT W. RICHARDSON, Reading, Massachusetts

M R. Chairman, Honorable Judges, Ladies and Gentlemen:  
 "Let the rich and the great  
 Ride in splendor and state,  
 I envy him not—I declare it.  
 I eat my own ham,  
 My own chicken, and lamb,  
 I shear my own fleece, and I wear it.  
 I have lawns, I have bowers,  
 I have fruit, I have flowers,  
 The lark is my morning alarmer.  
 So, my jolly boys, now  
 Here's God speed the plow,  
 And long life and success to the  
 farmer."

To discuss farm life is to discuss an occupation as old as civilization itself. Before man tilled the soil he lived by hunting and fishing. With the advent of agriculture his lot in life changed for the better, and side by side with its development there arose the opportunity for some people to turn their attention to other fields. By the time we reach the Pyramids of Egypt, the point which marks according to most historians the change from barbarism to civilization, the necessity for each individual to provide his daily food had ceased, thereby making possible the construction of those enormous piles of stone, still one of the wonders of the world. Later came the arts and sciences, developed by men who could give time and thought and investigation while others provided them with food. In those early days, however, farm labor was largely slave labor and hence was looked down upon as an occupation beneath the notice of a freeman. Many centuries elapsed before agriculture came into its own, but today no one disputes the right of the farmer to take his place among the world's most important workers, and no plans for the betterment of society which ignore his welfare can be successfully carried out. Because the work of the farmer has made possible the growth of so many other occupations, the future of a young man is no longer fixed or predetermined. Once, not so long ago in this country, and even today in many countries, especially India, a boy becomes a rug maker because his father before him was a rug maker. But now an American father believes that his son should choose that vocation for which he seems best fitted. The question, therefore, "Why Be A Farmer?" becomes a pertinent one, and in order to reach a conclusion based upon sound judgment, a survey of the advantages to be had in this pursuit is necessary. In other words, what inducements can farm life offer, strong enough to impel one to choose it as a life work?

In times of prosperity admittedly the farm in net cash profit does not equal the income from a number of other lines of work, but in times of depression the results are by no means so disastrous to the individual as in most branches of business. It is this latter condition which confronts us today. Thousands—yes, even millions—

of men in the various trades are out of employment altogether, cannot provide for themselves and for their families sufficient food and clothing, and in many instances even shelter. From a physical standpoint these men are in a most serious position, yet how much greater is their mental torture in being unable to provide properly for those whose welfare is their responsibility. Not so the man who owns his farm. True, the amount of ready money he can command is limited. The cash returns he can secure in exchange for his products are pitifully small, but he and his family need neither starve nor freeze. Compared with his unfortunate brotherman his lot is one to be envied. His brother of the trades returns, after a day spent in vainly seeking any work whatever, to a saddened home and often hungry children. The farmer returns, after a day spent in productive toil, to a home of at least comfortable circumstances.

The depression, however, will not last. Our recoveries from disasters of a similar nature in the past teach us this. Already work is becoming more plentiful. Men are returning to their trades. With the recovery of industry it may well be that those engaged in some lines of business will outstrip the farmer in the accumulation of wealth that can be measured in dollars and cents. But the man of money is not the really wealthy man. A successful life is not a mere matter of dollars and cents.

Consider these ideals for a successful life; first, that we become of value to our community and through it to our state and nation; second, that we secure for ourselves the satisfaction of accomplishment; third, that we acquire the blessing of contentment.

In no walk of life is it possible to reach these aims more successfully than upon the farm. The very land itself is an integral part of the town in which it is situated, and as the owner of such an integral part the farmer is vitally interested in whatever makes for the welfare of the community. He has not only the general interest in town affairs, which any good citizen should feel, but he has a personal interest, a partnership interest, if you please, in the deals into which his company, as it were, enters. The opportunity for church life, good roads, and good schools, which an able management of town affairs should provide, he endeavors to secure by taking the time to accept public office. His hours of work are long, to be sure, but he has complete control of the division of his time. In answer to the question, "What would be your advice to the youth of today who wish to succeed?" Calvin Coolidge once said, "Behave yourself and work hard." The farmer's manner of living well fits him for the social contacts he makes and enables him to be of real service to his fellow-townspeople. Ordinary service, you say, nothing spectacular nor remarkable about it. Granted, so far as the spectacular side is concerned, but the

real business of living is not a circus. As for remarkable, one need only to point to one or two examples to show the equality of the farmer with the man engaged in any other pursuit. Luther Burbank did more in furthering the welfare of his country than thousands of men whose names have formed the headlines of newspapers. "Yes, I know," says the graduate about to select his life work, "but I want to enter a field where there is opportunity to do something unique, something I may be remembered for." Good! Why not? Does he hesitate to choose the life of a farmer because he fears he cannot realize his ambition there? Let him take note of Ernest Wilson, "Chinese" Wilson, of the Arnold Arboretum, one of the show gardens of America. Mr. Wilson introduced and successfully grew in this country more foreign plants than any other man.

Secondly, the satisfaction of accomplishment afforded the farmer is unlimited. Such satisfaction may be secured in some degree by any one who faithfully performs the duties set before him. We have been wont to look upon law, medicine, finance, and like branches of the arts and professions as offering the best chance for securing the satisfaction of accomplishment. But let it be distinctly understood today that agriculture is both an art and a profession. It requires a more diversified knowledge than almost any other line of work. It is claimed that, to be successful in law or medicine, ten years is not too long a time one must expect to give to preparation, but it is equally true in the case of the farmer. He must expect to devote years to study and experiment in his chosen field before he can become master of his craft. And, as in the professions, there lies before him an ever widening horizon beyond whose limits no one has yet gone. If the word specialist carries with it any particular credit, the farmer may secure that too, for livestock, poultry, fruit, and the market-garden offer the same opportunity to the farmer as corporation or criminal law to the lawyer, or surgery or diseases of the eye to the doctor. Again, the opportunity to serve mankind becomes a point of discussion, and in this respect agriculture may be likened to the keystone of an arch, the other stones of which are the multitude of occupations in which men are engaged. It is a wonderful piece of masonry. It typifies the strength, the beauty, and the lasting qualities of our civilization. We are justly proud of its construction. But let us never lose sight of the fact that the removal of that keystone will bring about the collapse of the whole structure. Without the farmer to feed him the lawyer would have no time for the preparation of his brief nor the surgeon for the development of skill to perform his delicate operations. In a word, farm life is the backbone of all life.

Finally, what of contentment? It is

the end toward which all effort is directed, and herein lies one of the best arguments in favor of farming. Underneath the myriad purposes which form the motive power of men's activities, buried more or less deeply by the necessity of providing for everyday existence, lies the hope of accumulating at some time sufficient surplus to indulge the desire of almost every man's heart to own a piece of land upon which to plant what he may choose, to watch the growth under his constant care, and to gather whatever harvest may be produced. There he is "lord of all he surveys," and his success depends directly upon the degree of intelligence and industry he brings to his work. All his labor has a direct bearing upon the comfort and contentment of him and his family. He is, in effect, the guiding influence of a little kingdom, a kingdom, as Longfellow, in his "Evangeline," said,

" . . . Darkened by shadows of earth,

But reflecting the Image of Heaven," where everyone is bent on contributing his or her share toward the welfare of all. If farm life can rightly be made the goal of man's later years, how far greater will be the blessing of contentment that will come to him who chooses this work at the outset of his career.

#### From a Radio Talk by Rev. Carroll Freeman, a Former Vocational Agriculture Pupil of Virginia

WE of York County are indeed thankful that we have an organization of Future Farmers in our community, under the splendid leadership of C. E. Kirchmier, our teacher of agriculture.

He has shown to our citizens that the need of our community, the need of our state, the need of America, is a better trained country youth, who is willing to serve, to cooperate, to work for the greatest good of the greatest number of people.

Therefore, with this in mind, he is devoting his time and energy with our youth: to creating more interest in the intelligent choice of a farming occupation; to creating and nurturing a love of country life, such things as the beautification of home and school grounds; to providing recreational and educational entertainment; to promoting thrift, through the establishment of savings accounts; to establishing the confidence of the farm boy in himself and his work; to developing local leadership. — — —

During these days of social unrest, of agricultural discontent in some parts, of the disappearance of the love of labor as the source of joy in life, we need young men who can lead our people out of themselves into the world, who can bring order out of chaos, who can show to the world that the success of an individual is not determined by stocks and bonds, money and real estate, by the abundance of things which he has, but by the service he has rendered his fellow man.

Serve, young man, and your life will be a success, you will climb the highest mountain and dig the deepest mine.

Serve and you will become the language of all people and understand the heart-throbs of every individual. Serve, and you will be following in the footsteps of the One, who two thousand years ago stepped out of the glory of the skies into human want, companioned with men who toiled, walked the dusty highway of the common life, and stood among the multitudes crying, "I am among you as one that serves."

We look to you, Future Farmers of America, to help bring about a new era, to change our people from a self-centered to a world-cultured goal.

Boys, be not discouraged if at times you find the road rough and the hills steep, but press on. A goal won without a struggle does not bring satisfaction. Struggle and progress. Striving and fighting, pushing out and putting forth, after all, are the things that count. The longing to achieve drives us on, maybe not to the goal, but to life.

"Be strong! We are not here to drift, We have hard work to do and loads to lift;

Shun not the struggle, face it!

'Tis God's gift. Be strong.

Be strong! It matters not how deep entrenched the wrong;

How hard the battle goes, the day how long.

Faint not, fight on! Tomorrow comes the song."

Future Farmers of America, your possibilities are immeasurable. There are still worlds to conquer — — — Pull off your coat and collar,

Get to work, and push and holler, and you'll put Future Farmers on the top.

Every booster boosting,

Not a rooster roosting,

And you'll never, never stop.

#### Future Farmers of America as Rural Service Clubs

THE cities are filled with service clubs, such as the Rotary, Exchange, Kiwanis, Lions Club, etc. Some of these clubs have junior service clubs for boys of high school age. They are all good and play a very important part in the social and civic life of the cities. Why cannot the Future Farmers of America function as a junior service club for rural life? In fact, that is what the F. F. A. is doing in many places. Although the F. F. A. does not meet as a "knife and fork" club, I see no reason why the fellowship about the banquet table could not be made a more common event, with valuable social and recreational features. The Future Farmers Chapter does have committees through which it serves the school and the community in the interest of agriculture and rural life. It does have a state and national organization, with splendid programs of service. It seems to me that F. F. A. could well pattern after some of the excellent activities of the old and established service clubs of America.—A. W. N., The Fan Mill, Illinois.

#### From California

ANDERSON Future Farmers have a good time and make money for the club treasury at the same time by stag-

ing an annual harvest ball. The affair is entirely invitational, and everybody in the community turns out. This year over \$100 was added to the club treasury with which to pay dues, etc. Who said "big bad wolf"?

Marysville Future Farmers started something when they invited their alumni brethren to a banquet. Good eats, mountain music, and good fellowship was the order of the evening. It is hoped this banquet will pave the way for a permanent F. F. A. alumni organization that will lead the way and show the young 'uns how to shoot.

The Bakersfield chapter recently cooperated with the high school P. T. A. in a project tour. Thirteen cars with more than 50 persons made the 38-mile circuit, visiting each type of project carried on by the Future Farmers. At the conclusion of the trip at the school farm, the visitors stayed until dark, they were so interested.

#### From Indiana

The F. F. A. Chapter at Kempton, Indiana, took over the management of a small orchard. The boys did all labor and furnished half the spray materials, receiving one-third the fruit. Valuable experience was gained in pruning, fertilizing, spraying, harvesting, and marketing.

A community service project planned and conducted by this chapter has proved popular and successful. The boys test seed corn for farmers and for themselves by the rag doll method. The charge has varied from 75 cents to 50 cents per 100 ears. Money earned goes into the funds of the chapter. From 12,000 to 4,000 ears have been tested annually.—J. B. Oyler, Adviser, Kempton, Indiana.

#### Two Sales

I ATTENDED this sale and also one on the adjoining farm the week before. Both sold cows. In appearance the cows were much alike. In the first sale they averaged \$38.50. In this sale they averaged \$57.50.

#### SALE NOTICE

This is a credited herd of cows that have been on record for 2 years—These cows run from 365 pounds to 436 pounds butter fat a year. These cows have been under supervision of our vocational agriculture teacher, Wm. Shively, Monrovia, Indiana.

I have never seen so much interest in an ordinary farm sale crowd. Actually, they crowded around so close that the sale had to be stopped until they would back away. That is what *quality* will do.—R. W. Gregory.

Every member of F. F. A. should have some definite responsibility and take an active part in the work. The boy who is "just a member" and never is given anything to do will soon lose interest, and may eventually drop out entirely.

